



February 25, 2011

Senator Toni Harp
Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Harp:

I am writing you today on behalf of the University of New Haven to voice my deep concern for Governor Malloy's proposed cut to the Connecticut Independent College Student (CICS) grant program in his biennium budget. The CICS grant program provides critical financial aid to Connecticut residents attending Connecticut independent colleges.

The governor has proposed cutting this program by **25% in fiscal year 2012 and 50% in fiscal year 2013**. At an average grant award of \$3,828, the proposed cuts mean that 1,523 students will no longer receive a grant in the first year of the biennium and that 3,058 students will not receive one in the second year.

As you are well aware, Connecticut is dealing with some of the most difficult economic times in its history. While the Governor says he is committed to a passing a budget that creates jobs and helps to grow the state's economy, this cut will directly impact the ability of Connecticut residents to receive a quality education and to be prepared to fill the jobs of tomorrow that will help pull our state out of the economic doldrums. Connecticut's independent colleges award more than half of the degrees earned in key economic development areas such as engineering and related technology (70%), computer and information science (82%), and biological sciences (58%). Cutting off access to these programs will only hurt Connecticut's chances at a quick economic recovery.

Further, the state's investment in financial aid to help Connecticut students attend independent colleges has a dramatic return on investment for the state. Connecticut independent colleges award nearly half of the degrees awarded in the state and more than half of the degrees received by minority students. At a cost to the state of only \$1,615 per degree earned compared to approximately \$45,238 per degree awarded by the public institutions of higher education, CICS grants represent a tremendous bang for the taxpayer buck! Cutting this program will force students to attend public institutions of higher education at a further cost to the state or to leave the state to earn their degree, which only perpetuates the damaging "brain drain" that Connecticut has been dealing with for years.

Support students and higher education. Please don't shortchange student financial aid in the biennium budget. Higher education is critically important to our economy and our future.

Sincerely,



James S. McCoy, Ph.D.
Vice President for Enrollment Management